

# Short Story Book Circles

---

*Ongoing Unit Assignment**40 % of Unit Mark*

---

Throughout our unit we will be splitting into **Book Circles** to speak about each short story, allowing us to engage in focused discussion to help master our communication and literary analysis skills.

Whenever a **Book Circle** is scheduled we will divide into our **assigned book circles** to speak about our impressions and experience with the day's short story, with one group member assuming the role of **Facilitator** of the book circle, and another assuming the role of **Note Taker** to document the discussion.

**Every student** will have the chance to take on **both of these roles** (at different times) by the end of the unit. As a book circle you will sign-up to decide which days each of you would like to take on the role of **Facilitator** and **Note Taker**. For **each** book circle meeting, **every member** is required to have **answered the three guiding questions** for that story and topic. Consider the guiding questions for each meeting as a **jumping off point** for your discussion. The teacher will momentarily join each of the book circles to listen in on that circle's discussion.



---

## BOOK CIRCLE POSITIONS

*The duties for each position within the book circle are as follows:*

---

### 1. Facilitator

- The facilitator will be responsible for **preparing and providing thoughtful and insightful questions** related to the short story and the “border of focus” for the day (i.e. ethnicity, gender roles, culture differences).
- The facilitator will help **guide** the **flow** of the **discussion**, keep the group **on topic**, and allow everyone a **chance to speak**.
- **While the facilitator** takes on a role of a mediator in facilitating the discussion (i.e. getting the ball rolling and helping with any lulls in conversation) **everyone is**

**responsible** for their own contributions to each book circle. **The book circle is a group effort, through and through.**

## **2. Note Taker**

---

- The note taker is responsible for **recording the group discussion** and **organizing the themes and ideas** your group speaks on in a written form.
- These notes are meant to **compliment your discussion**, to answer the guiding questions and then lead into new territory.
- The Note Taker **documents** the **topics and ideas** your group speaks about as well as the **unresolved questions** that your book circle brings up, while still participating themselves in the discussion.
- These notes will be **handed in** at the end of every book circle and then **returned** to your group so that every member will have them as a reference.

## **3. EVERY MEMBER of the Book Circle**

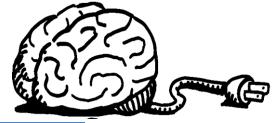
---

- For each meeting every member of the book circle is expected to have **read the day's short story**, completed the **three guiding questions** for that short story, and be **ready to discuss** the themes and content of the story.
- Ensuring that you have read the day's short story and answered the associated guiding questions is paramount in **showing respect** for the work of the other members of your book circle, so please strive to meet this mark.
- Everyone will be marked on his or her contribution and preparedness for the book circle discussions under their **Participation Mark** for the unit. Part of this mark will be based on how your contributions strive to ask and address higher order thinking questions, which we will speak about shortly. \*



\* For more information see *“What is Higher Order Thinking?”* on the next page

## What Exactly is Higher Order Thinking?



- **High order thinking** challenges us to think beyond memorizing or restating facts, instead asking us to **analyze** them, **infer** from them, **connect** them to other facts and concepts, **categorize** them, **manipulate** them, **evaluate** them, put them together in new or novel ways, and **apply** them as we seek new solutions to new problems.
- In your **book circles** we will focus on engaging with **higher order questions** to further our **critical thinking** and **problem solving skills** and engage in meaningful discussion.

### THE FOLLOWING IS A SAMPLE OF HIGHER ORDER THINKING QUESTIONS:

#### ANALYSIS

- *Why do you think...?*
- *What are the parts or features of...?*
- *How is \_\_\_\_\_ related to...?*
- *What motive is there...?*
- *Can you list the parts...?*
- *What inference can you make...?*
- *What conclusions can you draw...?*
- *How would you classify...?*
- *How would you categorize...?*
- *What evidence can you find...?*
- *What is the relationship between...?*
- *Can you make a distinction between...?*
- *What is the function of...?*
- *What ideas justify...?*

#### SYNTHESIS

- *What change would you make to solve...?*
- *How would you improve...?*
- *What would happen if...?*
- *Can you elaborate on the reason...?*
- *Can you propose an alternative...?*
- *Can you invent...?*
- *How would you adapt \_\_\_\_\_ to create a different...?*
- *How would you change or modify the plot...?*
- *What could be done to minimize or maximize...?*
- *What way would you design...?*

- *What could be combined to improve...?*
- *Suppose you could \_\_\_\_\_. What would you do...?*
- *How would you test...?*
- *Can you formulate a theory for...?*
- *Can you think of an original way for the...?*
- *Can you predict the outcome if...?*

#### EVALUATION

- *Do you agree with the actions...? Why or why not?*
- *What is your opinion of...?*
- *Who would you prove or disprove...?*
- *What is the value of...?*
- *Would it be better if...?*
- *Why did the character choose...?*
- *What would you recommend...?*
- *How would you rate...?*
- *What would you cite to defend the actions...?*
- *How would you evaluate...?*
- *What choice would you have made...?*
- *What would you select...?*
- *How would you prioritize...?*
- *What judgment would you make about...?*
- *How would you justify...?*
- *Why is it better...?*

**Participation Rubric**

	<b>6-5 Capstone</b>	<b>4-3 Milestone</b>	<b>2-1 Benchmark</b>
<b>Preparation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Guiding questions are completed consistently</li> <li>- Up to date with readings</li> <li>- Takes ownership and responsibility for themselves as learners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Guiding questions are completed occasionally</li> <li>- Most often up to date with readings</li> <li>- Takes periodic ownership and responsibility for themselves as learners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Frequently late for class, Missing class without reason</li> <li>- Inattentive in class, unprepared, guiding questions are never or seldom completed</li> <li>- Not dependable or reliable</li> </ul>
<b>Attitude/Effort</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consistently on task, focused, shows respect for others</li> <li>- Listens actively, respectfully</li> <li>- Works to the best of their ability</li> <li>- Strives to improve/Open to improvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Effort is increasingly consistent</li> <li>- Occasionally shows respect to others and learning environment</li> <li>- Attitude is improving in quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Doesn't listen to others, talks when others are speaking</li> <li>- Distracts from discussion</li> <li>- Shows disrespect to peers and learning environment</li> </ul>
<b>Quality of Contribution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provides high quality class contributions regarding higher order questions (analysis, synthesis, evaluation)</li> <li>- Productive in class time</li> <li>- Contributes to class dialogue in and out of classroom</li> <li>- Engages in class activities</li> <li>- Actively cooperates and collaborates in group experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Occasionally productive in class time</li> <li>- Intermittently involved in class activities/dialogue</li> <li>- Needs to try and be more engaged within the classes themselves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Never or minimally contributes to class activities</li> <li>- Distracts from the learning of others</li> <li>- Does not cooperate with others</li> </ul>

Participation is the substance that connects our classroom community. Everyone has ideas, a voice, and a contribution to make, and this mark is a way to encourage each of us to continuously contribute to our own learning, the learning of our peers, and the greater classroom environment.

## Book Circle Facilitator Rubric

	<b>6 EXEMPLARY</b>	<b>5 STRONG</b>	<b>4 PROFICIENT</b>	<b>3 DEVELOPING</b>	<b>2 EMERGING</b>	<b>1 BEGINNING</b>
<b>Preparation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Comes prepared with a wealth and variety of informed ideas, opinions and questions</li> <li>- Has evidently spent time with the text, and on the border of focus, drawing meaningful connections between the two</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Comes prepared with many informed ideas, opinions and questions</li> <li>- In-depth research on the border of focus is evident</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Comes prepared with several informed ideas, opinions and questions related to the text</li> <li>- Some basic research on the border of focus is evident</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Comes prepared with some informed ideas, opinions and questions related to the text but the border of focus is largely an afterthought</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Comes prepared with only a few ideas, opinions and questions related to the text, ignoring the border of focus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Has not prepared informed ideas, opinions and questions pertaining to the short story</li> </ul>
<b>Quality of Ideas and Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ideas and questions presented are insightful, relevant, meaningful and well developed.</li> <li>- Evidence of original ideas and analysis</li> <li>- Higher order questions are presented, emphasizing analysis, synthesis and evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ideas and questions presented are relevant, meaningful, well thought out</li> <li>- Questions address some higher order thinking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ideas and questions presented are relevant, and well thought out, but questions need to be opened up/pushed further (greater depth of analysis, synthesis, evaluation)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ideas and questions presented are developing in complexity, but lack some substance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provides surface level questions with basic ideas, does not show evidence of much thought or effort put forth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Evidence of thought and effort behind book circle preparation is non-existent</li> </ul>
<b>Aptitude at Facilitating Discussion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student masterfully facilitates book circle by guiding the flow of discussion, keeping the group on topic, and allowing everyone a chance to contribute</li> <li>- Facilitator encourages the voices and ideas of others and proves to enrich the book circle as a whole</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student strongly facilitates book circle by guiding the flow of discussion, keeping the group on topic, and allowing everyone a chance to contribute</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student capably facilitates book circle by guiding the flow of discussion, keeping the group on topic</li> <li>- Still trying to find a balance between voices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student satisfactorily facilitates book circle by guiding the flow of discussion, keeping the group on topic</li> <li>- Needs to practice discussion skills to link different ideas together</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student scarcely facilitates book circle, often does not guide the flow of discussion, keep the group on topic, or allow everyone a chance to contribute</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student does not seek to guide the flow of the book circle, lets the discussion be dominated by a select few voices, and allows the circle to go off topic</li> </ul>

## Note Taker Rubric

	<b>6 EXEMPLARY</b>	<b>5 STRONG</b>	<b>4 PROFICIENT</b>	<b>3 DEVELOPING</b>	<b>2 EMERGING</b>	<b>1 BEGINNING</b>
<b>Content / Ideas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Notes fittingly ask and address higher level thinking questions (analysis, synthesis, evaluation)</li> <li>- Notes cover guiding questions, offer new insight, ask new questions and highlight key topics and avenues of discussion</li> <li>- Carefully selected content</li> <li>- Meaningfully connects border of focus to short story</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Great informative and focused detail</li> <li>- Offers questions, topics of discussion and some possible avenues for future discussion</li> <li>- Notes could tie short story to border of focus more overtly</li> <li>- Content could be more carefully selected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Good detail in notes, but could be extended</li> <li>- Offers some questions and avenues for further discussion</li> <li>- Development of discussion is easily discernable</li> <li>- Needs to tie short story to border of focus with greater depth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some detail in notes</li> <li>- Notes can veer off topic</li> <li>- Addresses mostly superficial questions</li> <li>- Discernable development to discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Very little detail in notes</li> <li>- Notes frequently go off topic</li> <li>- Thoughts and ideas presented are overly repetitious</li> <li>- Little discernable development to discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Notes are off topic, insufficient, with trite or simple ideas</li> <li>- No discernable development to discussion</li> </ul>
<b>Presentation/ Organization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Notes are neat and legible</li> <li>- Information is superbly organized by main ideas and details</li> <li>- Notes provide a logical and coherent flow as a response to the discussion</li> <li>- Notes compliment discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Notes are neat and legible</li> <li>- Flow of conversation is easy to comprehend from notes</li> <li>- Notes are organized with order and logic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Notes are mostly neat and legible</li> <li>- Flow of conversation is fairly easy to comprehend from notes</li> <li>- Notes could be organized more succinctly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Notes are satisfactory but basic, lacking detail and glossing over ideas.</li> <li>- There is some flow between ideas</li> <li>- Notes could use more substance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organization seems random and lacks order. There is little logical flow</li> <li>- Writing is hard to read</li> <li>- Organization impedes meaning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Writing is not legible</li> <li>- Organization is not evident</li> </ul>